



Special Edition – LWVK Annual Report 2019-2020: A Year Like No Other

President's Message

End of a League Year — What Comes Next?

League of Women Voters of Kitsap has many accomplishments to reflect on for the 2019-2020 program year. This special year-end edition of The Voter highlights what our local units and committees have worked on this year. It also gives us many ideas for what we can do next year.

I find it hard to acknowledge that we cannot gather in person to celebrate our year in review and welcome new board members and new program action for 2020-2021 because of the need to be safe and stay home. Most of our units and committees already have had one or more meetings by Zoom video conference. I am particularly grateful to the LWVWA for expanding its Zoom conferencing capacity, welcoming all of the local Leagues to schedule online meetings, and working with each group leader to master this new technology. Amy Peloff, LWVWA administrator, has been a most supportive trainer for all of us. I am even more grateful for the local support of Maurie Louis for cre-

ating step by step directions for beginners to use Zoom and to Meredith Green for agreeing to host our annual meeting with her Zoom account. We are facing many challenges in difficult times, but leadership like this makes it possible for us to continue our mission and stay in touch.

As we all know, the elections coming up in November will have very important consequences in determining our future. It is essential that we in the League do everything in our power to support secure elections, to make sure all eligible voters are registered, and to inform all voters about the candidates and issues to be determined by the fall elections.

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Leni Skarin

Voter Service

We have had a very active voter registration year starting with National Voter Registration Day, Sept. 24. We sent 184 registration forms to the auditor's office and sent 188 forms home to be mailed in by the voter. Forty volunteers were at Kitsap Regional Libraries, Olympic College, Coffee Oasis, all Kitsap County high schools and on the



The winning button design was created by Alicia Vause.

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Centennial of the 19th Amendment

We are continuing to plan a celebration of the 19th amendment to the US Constitution on Sept. 12 at the Silverdale Beach Hotel. It will be a bit of a history lesson and a bit of fun. We plan to send invitations to our members, women elected officials, and others that members might



Longtime Kitsap Leaguers Ardis Morrow, left, and Catherine Ahl performed at the 90th anniversary celebration of the 19th Amendment in 2010.

want invited. Ten years ago when we celebrated the 90th anniversary, many members brought their daughters or nieces (maybe this time granddaughters). Get

your hats and long skirts out, and hope that we'll be let out of our houses by September.

— Catherine Ahl

Membership

Membership records show the following data for the period beginning May 2019 to May 2020: 34 new members. Our total membership to date is 203.

There are two student memberships, 13 joint memberships on record.

Membership by Units:

Central Kitsap/Bremerton – 52

Bainbridge – 54

North Kitsap – 55

South Kitsap – 42

As each new member joins the ranks of LWV-Kitsap, there is a preponderance of interest in GOTV (Get out the vote). DEI (Diversity, Equity and Inclusion) is another frequent interest category. Voter registration has followed close behind these areas of interest as well.

— Carol Larsen



Seattle Librarian Di Zhang brought his "Fake News Survival Guide" to Bremerton in September.

Program Planning Committee

This year's monthly meetings highlighted a number of topics of concern to our members and the greater Kitsap community: In September, Seattle Librarian Di Zhang brought his "Fake News Survival Guide" to our community with a presentation that helped us sort fact from fiction in the digital world. Our October program, "Fixing Congress: Restoring the Legislative Branch," was presented by Sixth District Congressman Derek Kilmer. He explained the work of the "Select Committee on the Modernization of Congress" and other bipartisan efforts. The Program Planning Committee assisted the Housing Committee in November to present "A Report Card on Sheltering Kitsap County Residents: Current and Upcoming Housing Opportunities," which explored four different

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Washington State ferries. Before the Presidential Primary, we registered and pre-registered 427 students and sent 632 forms home. A system was set up where each high school now has a specific LWV contact person. Our volunteer pool grew to 71 in 2020. We established an all-unit Voter Registration/Get Out the Vote Committee with 13 members. The committee will be focusing on both voter registration and getting out the

vote. We have been delayed in setting up voter registration opportunities in the spring because of Coronavirus. Arrangements have already been made with the libraries when they open, and the three Goodwills will be another target. The Bainbridge Unit celebrated the LWV's 100th birthday at the Bainbridge Island Library on Feb. 14. The public had an opportunity to vote on a vote button design. Sixty-one people participated and the Rainbow Voter pin won.

— Pam Hamon

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Our very large volunteer pool who helped make voter registration a success in this last year is already turning its attention to planning effective actions to Get Out the Vote (GOTV). There will be candidate forums, voter registration and address updating events, and opportunities for every League member to join in making our local voter turnout as large as possible. With the uncertainties of the Covid-19 threat to public health, we will have to be creative and dedicated to use every technology, every method possible

to inform voters and to encourage them to vote. One activity that is already launched is the creation of rainbow colored VOTER buttons. I hope each of you will be able to attend an event to pick one up and wear it often, even though we cannot now predict when we will be meeting together in person!

If you were one of the more than 70 volunteers who helped with Voter Services registration events this year, THANK YOU! If you were one of the 30 volunteers who helped inform Kitsap residents about the importance of the census for redistricting and federal finan-

cial support to local communities, THANK YOU! If you were one of the dozen or so volunteers who helped organize, moderate, and staff candidate forums in October, THANK YOU!

Most importantly, if you are one of our 203 members eager to help with "Empowering Voters. Defending democracy," ENGAGE NOW!

The GOTV effort will have opportunities for everyone, so plan now to watch your League emails and Voter issues for the best volunteer roles for you in the League year ahead.

Leni Skarin, LWVK Co-president

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approaches to sheltering the homeless. December brought our annual Meet and Greet where local elected officials explored their roles in “Vision 2050” during a brunch at Olympic College’s Student Center. They shared the work of the Public Sound Regional Council to address anticipated regional population growth over the next 30 years. The League invited Amy Peloff, LWVWA Administrator, in February to highlight some of the LWV’s many successes while exploring what we can learn from our history, both positive and negative.

At the centennial brunch celebrating the founding of the League, we honored our members with 20 or more years of service. The COVID-19 pandemic necessitated the postponement of our March and April public education programs about “Recycling and Waste Management in Kitsap County” and our Earth Week collaboration with Olympic College exploring “Climate Change and Your Health.” We hope to bring these programs back in spring of 2021.

— Maureen Cervinsky

Housing Committee

The Housing committee, with new co-chairs this year, organized a well-attended and information-packed panel presentation in November. The program highlighted current and future housing opportunities for those experiencing housing insecurity in Kitsap. At the present time, committee activities are on hold because of the shutdown. Future plans include a gift drive to collect items for welcome baskets for new residents of Pendleton Place in Bremerton, tentatively slated to open in 2021. More information on how League members can help will be published later this year.

— Rochelle Karlsen and Connie Syapin

Action Workshop Report

LWV-K worked with the League of Women Voters of Washington to host an Action Workshop to prepare all of us to advocate for League issues during the 2020 Washington state legislative session. This was



State Sen. Emily Randall, one of the keynote speakers at the Action Workshop in Kingston, chatted with League members after her talk.

the fourth and final workshop, following three others held in late fall in Spokane, Olympia and Seattle.

The workshop was at the Village Green Community Center in Kingston on Jan. 4. There were 68 people attending. Keynote speakers Andy Nicholas, senior fellow at the Budget & Policy Center of Washington, and State Sen. Emily Randall representing the 26th Legislative District, were both very well received. Afternoon breakout sessions were led by members of the LWVWA lobby team on many different issue topics. The evaluation responses from participants were very positive, with much appreciation expressed for the well planned program and informative presentations. Many participants commented that they were energized by the information shared and eager to engage in advocacy during the Legislative session.

In addition to providing excellent training, the Action Workshop resulted in a surplus after costs of \$125.79 for LWV Kitsap. Members of the Action Workshop Planning Committee were: Leni Skarin (chair), Catherine Ahl, Martha Burke, Betsy Cooper and Carol Larsen.

— Leni Skarin

Publicity Committee

During the year we did the normal publicity with posters, getting our events onto online calendars, writing several Letters

to the Editor, and submitting several press releases. We sent mass emails announcing our public events using the MailChimp tool. These reached over 1,000 people across Kitsap County each time. Victoria Hilt was a great help with posting events on our Facebook page, and Alicia Vause has done a great job managing the League’s website. She added web pages when needed as well as quickly responded to requests to post new announcements and remove old ones.

One of the publicity highlights this year was an early discussion between Retired Judge Anna M. Laurie and Kitsap County Auditor Paul Andrews regarding the presidential primary and how this primary was different than in the past. It was filmed in the BKAT studio in Bremerton and is posted on our website. We also filmed some of our events and are experimenting with live streaming them to either Facebook or YouTube.

The need for publicity waned a bit with the pandemic but before the year ends we hope to submit various articles about what we do to the Kitsap Sun.

Census Ambassadors Project

LWV Kitsap participated in the 2020 Census Complete Count Kitsap Committee. Leni Skarin, Jeannie Allen, and Lydia Olsen shared attendance as LWV Kitsap

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Our Meet and Greet in December brought elected officials together to discuss Vision 2050 at Olympic College.

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representatives at the monthly meetings.

Our outreach project for educating people about the importance of the census and encouraging all to participate consisted of two parts. A flyer advertising the LWV-Kitsap support for the census was developed, printed, and displayed on many community bulletin boards.

A Census Ambassadors program was developed, and after a training orientation in January, 29 volunteers from LWVK and three friends of the League worked in teams for two hours every Saturday in February to share information about the census process and its importance to local communities.

The libraries who hosted this outreach activity were Bainbridge Island, Port Orchard, Poulsbo, Silverdale and Sylvan Way, as well as the Village Green Community Center. At least 380 people were engaged with, and about 180 handouts were distributed. — Leni Skarin

“0 to Three” Study Group

The “0 to Three” Study has been ongoing for the past year. The committee has met six times including once at the UW to learn about the science of early brain development and another time at Olympic College to learn how the science contributed to the education of providers. Our dates to meet with important providers — Kitsap Public Health and Kitsap Community Resources — were abruptly canceled due

to the virus. We hope when this lockdown ends we'll get back on track because both of the agencies welcomed our initiatives. In the future we also hope to meet with funders and regulators.

— Rosalind Renouard

Technology

We have made good strides this year in the area of technology. Last year we purchased both wireless and wired microphones and a speaker. During this year we have learned how best to use these in the various types of venues we use. We have also started using a videocam to actually make our own videos of programs that are presented in venues that are not already set up to use the Bremerton Kitsap Access Television services. At the same time we are learning how to livestream these events to either YouTube or Facebook.

— Maurie Louis

Water Resources Committee

This Committee has remained engaged and interested in water issues over the year while only meeting periodically. In early 2019 we met with Silverdale Water to learn about their efforts to plan for and lay the groundwork, literally, for reclaimed water to be used in multiple buildings in the Silverdale area. In April we met with KPUD, a large water purveyor in Kitsap, to learn about a water well pumping experiment they were planning then,

and now are undertaking with Silverdale Water to shut off wells and turn on others to measure groundwater height changes caused by pumping manipulation. With the information gathered they are testing their models so groundwater movement. We will be reaching out to KPUD soon to ask for a report on what they have learned from this year-long study.

The Practical Guide to Kitsap Water, written by the Committee and published by the League in 2018, was shared with the public in various ways including at the Kingston Open House in the fall and at a meeting of the group Enlighten in Bremerton in October. In December at a Committee meeting we started talking about the recently reported speculative water rights sales in Eastern Washington, and several members have been following this issue.

— Betsy Cooper

Legislative Liaison

I was asked to take on the job of Legislative Liaison as the state Legislature went into session at the beginning of the year. My job was to follow what was happening with key legislation of interest to our members and convey our interests and concerns to the Lobby Chairs. Just before the session started we held a successful Action Workshop in Kingston attended by more than 60 people as well as most of the Lobby Chairs. Later in January we participated in Democracy Day in

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Bainbridge Island Unit

Like all the LWV-K units, Bainbridge Island Unit members spent the past year “Empowering Voters, Defending Democracy” by registering young voters at the BI High school; registering ferry-riders and holding Voter Registration on summer Saturdays at the BI library. Members participated in the BI Primary Forums and worked with the GOTV committee to formulate actions including standing with “Mail in your Ballot” posters at the ferries. In October the BI and North Kitsap Units held a joint monthly meeting hosting State Sen. Christine Rolfes in an informative presentation on the 2020 legislative issues. Other monthly meetings included Bainbridge Island experts on issues including Affordable Housing, BI Parks and Recreation, and the BI Climate Change Advisory Committee, which unfortunately had to be postponed due to the COVID-19 restrictions. In January several members attended the 2020 Action Workshop in Kingston to get informed about advocating for the 2020 legislative priorities. Our January Unit meeting was devoted to sharing lessons learned at the workshop to all members highlighting the LWVWA Legislative Newsletter as a tool for advocacy. And when the call went out for Census Ambassadors several members attended Census Training and worked to provide facts

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Olympia where Kitsap League members had a chance to talk directly to their legislators about key legislation that the League supported.

This was a “short” legislative session, only 60 days, which made it harder to garner the necessary support and momentum for major changes. Even with the gathering storm clouds of the coronavirus, the Legislature was able to make progress on a number of issues of interest to League members. This included expansion of voting rights authorizing 17-year-olds to participate in primary elections if they will be 18 by the next election. Environmental legislation included a ban on thin plastic bags and amending the greenhouse gas emission standards. There may still need to be a special session to address the budget impacts of the state’s response to the virus. The State League Council meeting scheduled for late May will include sessions on Advocacy, and since now it will be conducted virtually, it will be more accessible to members. — Martha Burke

and answer census questions at the BI Library during February. We are pleased to welcome 11 new members to the unit this year and we recognize that the remainder of 2020 brings unprecedented challenges in carrying out the League’s mission. — Madelyn Fox

Bremerton/CK Unit

Our unit used our monthly meetings to become better informed about our local community and government. We invited Ray Garrido—Legal Services Director, and Airen Lydic—Program Director, for the Kitsap Immigration Assistance Center, to update us on the current state of immigration services in Kitsap County. We asked Cary Bozeman, Port Commissioner for District 1, to give us a better understanding of the mission and operation of the Port of Bremerton. Following the public education program about sheltering the homeless, we invited Jessica Guidry, Kitsap Public Health Emergency Response Manager and LWVK Health Committee



League members brought colorful “democracy rocks” to their legislators on Lobby Day in Olympia.

Diversity, Equality and Inclusion Committee

This year’s DEI focus was to put together a resource list of community agencies that serve and/or represent members of diverse communities, and to work toward having all persons counted in the census. Members of the committee joined the Kitsap Complete Count committee, and then trained League members to be ambassadors. The Census Ambassadors went to the libraries in each area of the county to give information about the 2020 census for five Saturdays in February. Members continued to be active in Voter Registration and

Chair, to share her knowledge regarding the public health effects of homelessness. Victoria Hilt also visited to demonstrate how Facebook may be used to help connect our members. Dr. Erin Prince, Central Kitsap School District Superintendent, asked to join our unit for an informal conversation around the strengths and opportunities that our schools are experiencing. In January we met to draft recommendations for LWVK 2020-21 Program and chose to recommend researching open spaces and pocket parks in Kitsap County and also a public education program focusing on the current state of our local journalism. We also received Census 2020 training from Leni Skarin. We toasted the 100th anniversary of the LWV on Feb. 15. In April we hosted our first ever Zoom unit meeting and heard about the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the city of Bremerton and small businesses from Mayor Greg Wheeler and Bremerton Chamber of Commerce President/CEO Denise Frey. We had a rich and rewarding 2019-20 exploring our community and establishing a solid foundation for our revitalized Bremerton/CK Unit.

— Maureen Cervinsky

North Kitsap Unit

The North Kitsap Unit has 54 members with an
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information fair events. We have set the following goals for the next year:

- Prepare a video presentation for the LWVWA Council online conference
- Plan for a Speak-Up School in order to prepare citizens in Kitsap County to testify at the Redistricting Commissioners Public Hearing in May or June of 2021.
- Encourage all committees in the LWV-Kitsap to use a DEI lens when they plan events.
- Strengthen relationship with persons from diverse communities and attend events that are put on by these communities, have a booth at these events if possible and share LWV materials.
- Share a DEI Resource Guide on the LWV-Kitsap website.
- Lessen barriers for persons from diverse communities for becoming LWV members.

If you are interested in working with the DEI committee, contact one of the co-chairs: Jeannie Allen, jallen360@gmail.com or Susan Griggs, subes0803@hotmail.com.

— Susan Griggs and Jeannie Allen

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option for 10 who live in Silverdale/Seabeck. Usually between 10 and 12 members attend each meeting. We meet on the 4th Wednesday of the month at the Poulsbo Library. The meeting was changed to Fishline for 3 months because the library was doing a renovation. Because of the COVID-19 pandemic we did not meet in March but plan a Zoom meeting with 10 members in April. Zoom meetings may continue depending upon interest.

This year the members preferred not to have speakers for most meetings. They preferred discussion on a variety of topics; legislative issues, voting, program planning, the census, and updates from committees.

We had a joint meeting in October with the

Bainbridge Unit with guest speaker Senator Christine Rolfes.

The March meeting with Vaan Wolfe from the YWCA on domestic violence and the second joint meeting in April with the Bainbridge Unit on White Supremacy both were cancelled.

Hopefully we will be able to re-schedule both in the future. For the first time our unit continued to meet through the 2019 summer. Our August meeting was a potluck picnic. Members agreed that we should continue meeting through the 2020 summer. — Pam Hamon

South Kitsap Unit

We've had a busy year. Besides members actively participating in many of the LWV-K

committees and attending monthly events sponsored by LWV-K, the SK Unit had a variety of speakers at our monthly meetings, including Jon Brand and Jo Meints of the Kitsap County Public Works Roads Division; Dave Rasmussen, the Public Information Officer for Kitsap Department of Emergency Management; and Tim Winter, the new South Kitsap Superintendent of Schools.

Six of our members attended the LWV State Convention in Olympia in June. Eight of our members staffed a table at the Port Orchard library on Saturdays to register voters and give out information about the census.

The SK Unit meets at 10 a.m. the second Monday of the month, usually at the Port Orchard library. — Susan Daniel

LWV Kitsap Committees and Current Chairs

Centennial Celebration — Catherine Ahl
 Civics — Catherine Ahl
 Diversity, Equity and Inclusion — Jeannie Allen
 Early Childhood Education — Rosalind Renouard
 Health Care — Jessica Guidry
 Housing — Rochelle Karlsen and Connie Syapin
 Program — Maureen Cervinsky
 Publicity — Maurie Louis
 Voter Registration and Get Out the Vote — Pam Hamon
 Candidate Forums – In need of a leader
 Water — Betsy Cooper
 Website — Maurie Louis

ON THE WEB

Find our local League news, meeting notices, publications, and reminders on our Facebook page or website, www.lwv-kitsap.org. Be sure to 'like' us on Facebook.

LWVUS Mission and Vision Statements**Mission Statement:**

Empowering voters.
 Defending democracy.

Vision Statement:

We envision a democracy where every person has the desire, the right, the knowledge and the confidence to participate.